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SUBJECT: Haiti Post-Qquake INL/NAS Assistance for MINUSTAH, HNP and Corrections

¶1. This message is sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: NAS Port-au-Prince, in conjunction with DEA, FBI, and other USG agencies, has stepped up advisory, logistical, and material support to GOH security institutions since the January 12 earthquake. Although short-staffed due to the departure of the injured senior Police Advisor and the absence of any FSN staff, NAS continues to coordinate with key-stakeholders to ensure that Haitian National Police (HNP) and GOH corrections maintain organizational and operational effectiveness. Embassy now requests additional support for the U.S. police contingent of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the HNP, and the Directorate of Prison Administration (DAP). END SUMMARY.

MINUSTAH

¶3. (U) Port-au-Prince NAS Director met with MINUSTAH Acting Deputy Police Commissioner for Development Richard Warren on January 17 to discuss MINUSTAH's needs and to coordinate support to the HNP. MINUSTAH lost much of its civilian, military and police leadership in the earthquake. Many of these individuals were in the Hotel Christophe HQ complex and were killed or injured when the building collapsed. Additionally, Villa Privee, the MINUSTAH Police headquarters also collapsed, killing or injuring many others in the UNPOL leadership. NAS Port-au-Prince immediately liaised with the U.S. United Nations Police (US UNPOL) contingent to coordinate rescue activity.

¶4. (U) MINUSTAH, including the US UNPOL officers, has relocated operations to the UN Logistics Base (LogBase) in the Tabarre area. Of the 44 US UNPOLs in the Contingent, 35 are in the Port-au-Prince operational area and the rest are spread throughout the country.

Roughly half those in Port-au-Prince, 18 US UNPOLs, were left homeless by the quake. Some are living at LogBase, some at the HNP Academy, and others at various apartments and guest houses in or near Petion-ville.

¶5. (U) MINUSTAH is finding it difficult to provide basic logistical support, shelter, and food to its personnel. PAE, the contractor responsible for the logistical needs of the US UNPOLs, has had operations crippled due to the injury and evacuation of its management personnel.

¶6. (U) Richard Warren noted that US UNPOLs in the medium term may need assistance with an operational base - perhaps on the open

field near to the Embassy - and with semi-permanent shelter. NAS will monitor that situation and make formal requests as appropriate.

¶17. (U) URGENT REQUEST: NAS has received a request from US UNPOLs for a minimum of 1,000 MREs and water to sustain personnel for one-two weeks until the food and water situation in Haiti can be re-assessed. Embassy asks that INL take appropriate measures to meet this request soonest.

HNP

¶18. (U) The HNP is currently operating at about 40% of its personnel strength. As of January 19, an estimated 1700-1900 of the 4500-person force in Port-au-Prince had returned to work. HNP headquarters, including Director General Mario Andresol's offices, were destroyed in the quake as were several commissariats and support facilities. The HNP high command is operating out of the HNP SWAT base in the Tabarre area adjacent to the UN Logbase. The HNP Academy remains largely intact and is usable as a base of operation. The Haitian Parliament convened its first meeting since the quake at the Police Academy.

¶19. (U) Embassy is already providing command and control advice and mentoring to DG Andresol via DEA Attache Darrel Paskett and FBI Attache George Quinlan. NAS advisors Joe Tassy and Ludger Kpanou (himself injured in the quake but now out of hospital) continue to render managerial, morale, and logistical support to HNP DG and other key commanders. As of January 17, HNP leadership met and drafted an action plan giving regional and sectoral taskings to police units.

¶110. (U) The HNP, working with MINUSTAH, has prepared a list of logistical requirements and requests for assistance which was sent in separate channels. NAS Port-au-Prince will follow up with MINUSTAH as requests are met, and determine whether to request reprogramming of funds in order to fill any gaps.

¶111. (U) Over the past week, NAS Port-au-Prince has provided HNP the following out of available stocks: solar panel battery charging stations for police radios; 50 shotguns with ammunition; 10 white smoke launchers with 50 canisters each for crowd control; 84 HNP uniform shirts; 906 BDU Trousers; 700 utility caps; 358 pairs of boots; and 5250 flexicuffs. Embassy also has provided 4800 MREs and water.

¶112. (U) URGENT REQUEST: HNP has requested 5000 MREs per day for the next week and SOUTHCOM is prepared to meet this request in extremis for a day or two. Future allocations, however, will require funding from INL. Embassy also requests INL assistance with providing the following: 500 Motorola radios and batteries, radio repeater and technical support; 2000 gallons diesel fuel for HNP vehicles; 9,000 uniforms for HNP; medication and first aid kits; and rubber gloves, masks, body bags; maglite flashlights and D cell batteries; helmets, shields and other riot gear.

¶113. (U) In order to promote the rule of law in Haiti, the HNP needs to project a sense of institutional stability and normalcy, both to its personnel and to the general population. As top priority, HNP needs retain those on the job now and to put back to work as many HNP officers as possible. Embassy's strong view is that HNP must meet its payroll, estimated at USD 4 million, in January and in

subsequent months. A regular paycheck will draw police officers back to work, and they in turn will provide a badly-needed security presence.

¶14. (U) URGENT REQUEST: Embassy requests that INL explore appropriate mechanisms for covering the HNP's January payroll out of NAS program funds. In conjunction with MINUSTAH, we will work with the GOH to find appropriate solutions to their payroll issue in the longer-term. Embassy and MINUSTAH will recommend that the GOH/HNP engage in a public information campaign to ensure that police officers know they will be paid on time and to urge them to return to work.

CORRECTIONS

¶15. (U) NAS-Haiti Director Platt met with Director of Prison Administration (DAP) Jean-Roland Celestin on January 18. Celestin oversees some 400 administrative staff and 718 correction officers. He candidly acknowledged that at the National Penitentiary and at other facilities, prison guards abandoned their posts during the earthquake, thus allowing prisoners to escape. Celestin estimated that about 15% of his corrections staff have returned to work. Although DAP has yet to take an official count, the vast majority of Haiti's 8732 inmate population is now out on the streets and many of them are armed and dangerous. US UNPOL Corrections Advisor Francois Davos, who works closely with Celestin, reported that in several cases, prisoners broke into weapons storage areas and helped themselves to firearms as they fled. Davos is investigating to determine the number and kinds of weapons that were taken.

¶16. (U) Aside from his concerns about feeding and hydrating his 400 administrative and 718 correctional staff, DAP Director Celestin's top priority was a technical engineering team to assess five sites in and around the Port-au-Prince area. Parts of the National Penitentiary may be structurally viable and able to hold several hundred inmates; the "Titanic" cell block, isolation ward and infirmary appear to have sustained minimal damage but a full engineering assessment needs to be conducted.

¶17. (U) URGENT REQUESTS: Embassy requests INL assistance with providing food and water for 1118 DAP staff for one-two weeks. In addition, Embassy asks that INL send a small team soonest to conduct engineering and technical surveys on these sites: Delmas 33, Petion-ville Women's Prison, National Penitentiary, Carrefour and Archaies. [N.b., given the lack of hotels and housing, and the hundreds of TDYers living inside the Chancery and on the grounds of the compound, INL TDY team should come with sleeping bags and towels, and be prepared to bed down on the floor and to shower in the gym.] Finally, this disaster also exposes the inadequacies of the DAP's internal communications systems. DAP is part of the HNP radio network, but the need to round up and transport larger numbers of prisoners for the foreseeable future will require a more robust radio capacity including another repeater - for which the additional repeater in the HNP request may suffice -- and a dedicated radio frequency on the HNP network.

¶18. (U) OTHER REQUESTS: DAP administrative and corrections personnel will need to be drawn back to work or new ones recruited. Meanwhile, augmenting the US UNPOL force with Creole speakers who have corrections experience would help meet tactical operational needs for officers to detain escaped inmates, and strategic goals of mentoring and capacity-building. Embassy recommends that INL use all available means to recruit experienced Creole-speaking corrections officers to augment the US UNPOL contingent. DAP Director Celestin also requested the following equipment items for 718 corrections officers: duty belts with belt keepers;

flashlights; flexi-cuffs, and flexi-cuff cutters; handcuffs; police whistles; and leg shackles. Embassy recommends that, to the extent possible, INL, provide this equipment through appropriate program funds.

¶19. (SBU) Celestin also requested ASP collapsible batons and pepper spray. Embassy does not believe that these requests should be filled, given concerns about adequacy of training in use of these non-lethal weapons and issues with Leahy vetting of GOH corrections officers.

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